

Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
U. S. Application No. 10/541,131

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 have been examined. Claims 1-4, 6 have been rejected to under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) and claims 7-10 have been rejected to under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 5 and 11 contain allowable subject matter.

I. Preliminary Matters

As set forth in the January 25, 2007 Amendment, the Examiner has not acknowledged Applicant's claim for foreign priority. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to mark the appropriate boxes on the Office Action Summary sheet in a subsequent Office Action.

Also, the Examiner has objected to the drawings as not showing the claimed feature of "either one or both of the input port and the output port are disposed such that either one or both of the axes of the input port and the output port are intersected by the valve stem of the valve disk." In view of the amendments to claim 1, however, Applicant submits that the objection is now moot.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Pat. No. 4,941,447 to Mannhardt ("Mannhardt")

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Mannhardt.

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A. Claim 1

By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 5 into claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 is now moot.

B. Claims 2 and 3

Since claims 2 and 3 contain features that are analogous to the features of claim 1 discussed above, Applicant submits that claims 2 and 3 are patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 1.

C. Claim 4

Since claim 4 has been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claim is now moot.

D. Claim 6

Since claim 6 is dependent upon claim 2, Applicants submit that claim 6 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mannhardt in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,935,612 to McCombs et al. (“McCombs”)

The Examiner has rejected claims 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Mannhardt in view of McCombs. However, since claims 7 and 8 are dependent upon claim 2, and claim 2 recites analogous features of allowable claim 5, Applicant submits that claims 7 and 8 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency.

IV. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mannhardt in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,621,788 to Delew et al. (“Delew”)

The Examiner has rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Mannhardt in view of Delew. However, since claim 9 is dependent upon claim 3, and claim 3 recites analogous features of allowable claim 5, Applicant submits that claim 9 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

V. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Mannhardt in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,564,782 to Fujimoto et al. (“Fujimoto”)

The Examiner has rejected claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Mannhardt in view of Fujimoto. However, since claim 10 is dependent upon

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claim 1, and claim 1 includes the allowable features of claim 5, Applicant submits that claim 10 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency.

VI. Allowable Subject Matter

As set forth above, the Examiner has indicated that claims 5 and 11 contain allowable subject matter. By this Amendment, Applicant has incorporated the allowable subject matter of claim 5 into claim 1. Accordingly, claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

VII. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

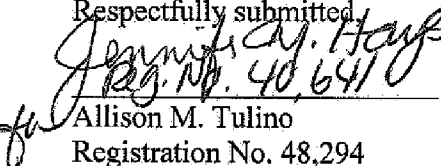
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Respectfully submitted,

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